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Campaign to Protect Rural England Talk to the Otter Valley Association – St Peters Hall, Budleigh Salterton, Wednesday 16th January 2019

I went to this event which was really well attended by local residents. The CPRE are an apolitical group. The purpose of the event was to further publicise the results of the Independent report commissioned by the CPRE into House numbers in Devon. One purpose of the report was to differentiate between the demand the government would have you believe is needed and genuine and affordable 'local housing need'. The former is being 2/3 fulfilled by those moving into Devon from out of area. Yet there is no infrastructure in place. The government is using house building to prop up the construction industry. The main messages were that the housing market is not 'broken', there is no housing crisis, no need for massive house building programmes but there is a very genuine need for affordable housing in the right places.

EDDC ruling councillors are not very enamoured with the CPRE – either it is not in their interests to do so, or perhaps not all are not familiar with 'evidence based' research?

The 2011 government stating that top down government targets have not worked. Yet here we are in the position of having top down housing targets set for us by central government and enforced by the planning Inspectorate. Where the government have released reports on housing such as the white paper of 2017, the figures given by the government do not appear to be evidence based but appear to be 'plucked out of thin air'. The Office for National Statistics housing statistics show that there will be less local demand for houses in Devon and a local growth in households of 13% and yet government have increased housing targets from 225,000-275,000 houses per year to 300,000 houses per year because governments housing figures are based on outdated projections of growth. To manage that the government adjusted the methodology for projecting housing need to ensure the figure comes out as 300,000 more houses needed. We would need an increase of 39% of the current build rates to reach government house building targets. We would need inward migration to increase from 7,000 per year to 12,000 people per year to meet the governments co called 'demand'.

There are 23 million houses in the country. The CPRE report showed that In East Devon we are continuing to build more houses than are needed. For example in Axminster there are two new housing estates with just 50% occupancy at present yet East Devon have just released yet another

press release about more housing as part of the Axminster Master Plan, with two more applications in for 104 new houses and 305 houses respectively. There are 2510 new houses per year planned for the Exeter outskirts and the GESP will impact us massively. Even Sir Hugo Swire has talked publically against GESP, though whether that is due to the strong possibility of another election remains to be seen.

I hesitated to join the CPRE as it was stated at EDDC in November at a Full Council meeting that if a councillor were a member of the CPRE that councillor would have a 'personal interest' and thus be ineligible to join in discussions on housing need and numbers. However, provided it is listed on a register of interests, there is no reason not to join and this sort of comment is typical of how the ruling party try to control opposing councillors. The £36 annual membership fee for the CPRE goes towards independent research such as the one released in October and they are very genuine in their efforts to do what their name suggests and protect rural England for future generations. The CPRE need as many new members as possible to help them continue with this valuable work.

Residents who attended were really disappointed by the lack of either parish council representatives or EDDC ward cllrs at the event, in fact I was the only one.

Visit to the EDDC Suez recycling Centre



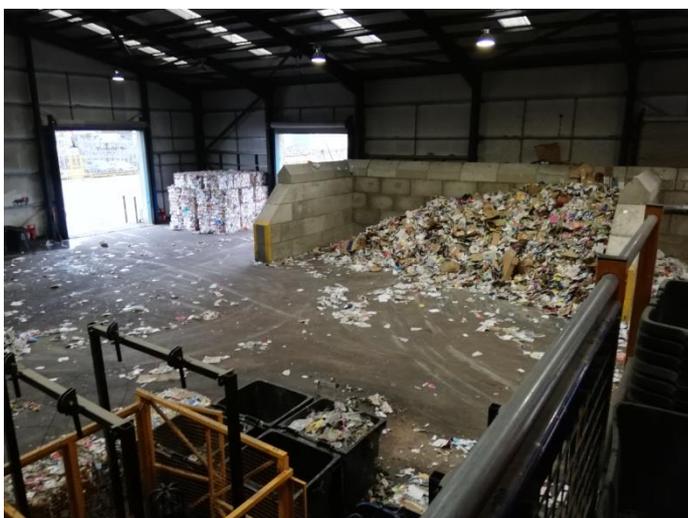
On Friday 18th January I visited the the Suez recycling centre. This was fascinating. The site area is surprisingly small considering the work that goes on. The visit started at 8.30 am but did not really get under way until past 9.00 am. I had to leave the visit early as I had to go to work but will go back again to ask the remaining questions I have. It was really interesting to see how the recycling is all put onto a conveyor belt and separated out by the machinery eg giant magnets pick up the metal early on

the conveyor belt. Paper and plastic is further separated out along the system. I had never understood before why we should not separate out our recycling helpfully into bags but my photo shows how a plastic bag full of plastic bottles has got stuck on the edge of the belt and will have to be taken out manually I think at a later point.

The bales of cardboard that have to be kept dry. If the processors find the cardboard is wet they reduce the amount of money they pay Suez for it on the grounds that it is heavier when wet. A problem with cardboard



Above : Plastic bag caught on the far site with washing detergent bottles inside



recycling is that broken glass sometimes gets into the cardboard as at the current time they both go into the green bag, so EDDC is now introducing a new White bag specifically for cardboard only. If your cardboard does not fit into this white sack it should be folded and put underneath the white sack.

Our food waste goes to a site in Cannington for recycling into a bio-digester. There is 24 tons of household food PER DAY going to waste.

Aluminium is selling for £900 per ton

Cardboard sells for between £15 and £35 per ton

Paper is increasingly difficult to sell as there is so much of it and I think before Christmas there was no demand at all.

One point of additional waste – each cllr who turned up without safety boots was given a brand new pair of protective boots all labelled and in its own box to keep – just for the sake of standing on a viewing platform for 30 minutes. (I had taken my existing pair).

New Cardboard Recycling bag for the roadside collection.

There is more and more cardboard to recycle as shopping habits change. A problem with cardboard recycling is that broken glass sometimes gets into the cardboard as they both go into the same green bag. Also the cardboard often gets wet which reduces its sale value so EDDC is now introducing a new White bag specifically for cardboard only. If your cardboard does not fit into this white sack it should be folded and put underneath the white sack. This is being trialled in Woodbury before being rolled out across East Devon. I think it will be really successful.

The Greater Exeter Strategic Plan remains shrouded in secrecy.

The following report on East Devon Watch summarises the situation:

East Devon District Council who had been dragging their feet for years to complete their Local Plan, finally managed to obtain the approval of the Planning Inspectorate in January 2016 to cover the period up to 2031. Lympstone was the first Neighbourhood Plan approved in 2015 and since then over 30 Neighbourhood Plans are either approved or in the process of being drafted by community groups within East Devon.

It was therefore thought that East Devon and its communities had substantial protection from greedy landowners and developers up to 2031 and with the extra protection of the East Devon Villages Plan, approved in July 2018 (which gave further defined policies for larger Villages and some large Business Parks) residents and developers appeared to understand where development would or would not be allowed.

However, in late 2016 Exeter City Council, whose Chief Executive Karime Hassan (previously East Devon's District Council officer who created and developed the concept of the new town of Cranbrook) proposed a joint "Strategic Plan", along with neighbouring councils East Devon, Teignbridge, and Mid Devon.

The four councils then started a joint over-riding masterplan for Exeter and the surrounding area known as the GESP (the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan).

It was clear that Exeter was almost completely "built-out" and the infrastructure for roads and transport required to further city centre and commercial growth, was urgently required, if the continued success known as the "Exeter Growth Point" was to continue. Without a joint plan for infrastructure, the commute into the City would become intolerable and hinder the targeted housebuilding requirements set by the Government for each of the 4 separate councils.

In October 2018 the Government drew up yet another updated version of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) very much on the lines of the 2012 Policies, but with various tweaks to assist in the over-riding government strategy of encouraging developers to build many more dwellings.

The new 2018 NPPF provided clearer guidance that if an individual Council was unable to provide enough development land for extra dwellings required by the government's growth targets, neighbouring councils may be allowed to build out extra housing for their partner and other neighbouring authorities.

According to East Devon District Councils Strategic Planning Committees agenda item 12 for discussion on the 29th January 2019:

"Timetable for production of a new East Devon Local Plan"

Within the introduction to the agenda item it states:

"...given changing circumstances and other factors, that a "light touch" review of the currently adopted local plan is unlikely to be a practical option for a new local plan."

What the changing circumstances and other factors are, is not explained, but it is clear from the report that it is in relation to GESP.

Because the GESP Strategic Plan policies will over-ride the East Devon Local Plan policies, the report seems to suggest that the "changing circumstances and other factors" relate to the new GESP policies which override the Local Plan, Village Plan and probably most Neighbourhood Plans – affecting a large area of East Devon! So much so that, rather than the GESP plan dovetailing into the 3-year-old approved East Devon Local Plan and 1-year-old Villages Plan with all the years of public consulting, Council debate and literally years of work by the planning team, it will be jettisoned for a brand-new Local Plan to dovetail into the strategies of the GESP plan!

Although the GESP plan has been in preparation for 2 years, no formal discussion or meeting has been held at any Council Chamber at any of the four Councils involved. Meetings have taken place to consider the 700 plus sites throughout the Greater Exeter area submitted for assessment by what is known as the "Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) panel". The Panel is made up of "key stakeholders", with a recognised interest in the development of land for housing and employment, and housing and economic development sector, including housebuilders, social landlords, local property agents and other related professionals together with local community representatives and other agencies. The membership of these meetings has been confidential and there has been no publication of their deliberations or recommendations.

To be clear: meetings between two lead councillors from each Authority, plus officers have kept the draft policies and site options totally under lock and key – with none of the meetings been reported or minuted.

However, all is to be revealed AFTER the local council elections in May 2019 – consultation has always been scheduled to begin no earlier than June 2019.

This suggests that the draft policies and site options affecting East Devon will be so radical and so totally at variance to the East Devon Local Plan and Villages Plan that they will all require total re-writing, with a brand-new Local Plan (subsidiary to GESP) and all the costs and uncertainties that this will bring.

Why have these Councils been so secretive on the GESP proposed development site considerations for proposed strategies for commercial and housing development for this part of Devon? Could it be that Tory controlled East Devon, Teignbridge, and Mid Devon Councils have elections on May 2nd this year (Labour Exeter elects only one-third of its council this year) and a brand-new super-growth plan – superseding their Local Plans – will not be considered much of vote-grabber?

Don't say you weren't warned!

Parking problems - Milmoor Vale, Newton Poppleford

The most recent issue is in the area of the warden assisted bungalows in Millmoor Vale. This is a narrow cul-de-sac. The criteria for living in one of these EDDC bungalows is that you must have a proven health condition that is not set to improve. Thus by the very nature of the occupants there are daily visits by health care assistants and ambulances. At one time very few residents who lived in these bungalows had cars but some residents now own multiple vehicles and campers vans which take up multiple spaces. There is a turning area at the end of the cul-de-sac that should be kept clear. There is a 'Turning area only' sign low down on the wall but this is often disregarded. However, there are a number of people who persistently park in that area, making life for those needing emergency medical care very difficult and blocking other residents from leaving. Interestingly PC Lee confirmed the legal situation, if you are prevented from leaving your drive due to being blocked in, this is an offence and a 101 call to the police should be put in so police can take action.

Four Elms Hill

No update. I will put in an FOI as this seems to be the only way to get information from DCC on what talks if any are going on behind the scenes. I note that the hill when traveling from the direction of the Hare and Hounds pub down into Honiton has now had new road markings put on. I would like to see the accident stats on that hill and compare it to Four Elms Hill and what criteria this filled.

Section 106 funds for Newton Poppleford

We have finally been notified that funds have been approved for the improvements to the play area, safety netting etc.

Parish Council news

Another defibrillator

A defibrillator has been fitted at the sports pavilion. This is so important as there can often be serious health incidents at sporting events, even in young people.

An AED awareness event booked for the 21st February at the PAV 7-9pm.

Anti-dog Dog Fouling signs

These can now be seen in multiple sites around the village at dog poo hot spots. Probably a bit too subtle for the hardened non-compliers IMO but let's hope it helps.

Val Ranger
Ward Cllr
Newton Poppleford and Harpford.

